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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/986,226 | 10/22/2001 | Paul Kenneth Whittingham | 13347US02 | 4979 |
| 7590 | 03/23/2006 | | EXAMINER | |
| McANDREWS, HELD & MALLOY, LTD. | | | EVANISKO, LESLIE J | |
| 34th Floor | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| 500 W. Madison Street | | | | 2854 |
| Chicago, IL 60661 | | | | |

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 09/986,226 | Applicant(s) WHITTINGHAM ET AL. |
| | Examiner Leslie J. Evanisko | Art Unit 2854 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

 Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 December 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-7,9-11,13-18 and 20-26 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 8,12,19,27 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 03/01/02 & 12/19/05 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

| | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
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DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The replacement sheets of drawings were received on December 19, 2005 and March 1, 2002. These drawings are approved by the Examiner.

Priority

2. The benefit claim filed on December 19, 2005 was not entered because the required reference was not timely filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5).

If the application is an application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) on or after November 29, 2000, the reference to the prior application must be submitted during the pendency of the application and within the later of four months from the actual filing date of the application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior application. If the application is a nonprovisional application which entered the national stage from an international application filed on or after November 29, 2000, after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371, the reference to the prior application must be made during the pendency of the application and within the later of four months from the date on which the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f) or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior application. See 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and (a)(5)(ii).

If applicant desires the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120 based upon a previously filed application, applicant must file a petition for an unintentionally delayed benefit claim under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) or (a)(6). The petition must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 or 119(e) and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5) to the prior application (unless previously submitted);
- (2) a surcharge under 37 CFR 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional.

The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional. The petition should be addressed to: Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

In particular, please note the MPEP states in chapter 200 that "Any benefit claim that does not both identify a prior application by its application number and specify a relationship between the applications will not be considered to contain a specific reference to a prior application as required by 35 U.S.C. 120. Such benefit claim may not be recognized by the Office and may not be included on the filing receipt even if the claim appears in the first sentence>(s)< of the specification or an application data sheet."

In this case, although applicant attempted to make a benefit claim in the first line of the original specification, since the applicant did not properly identify the prior application by its application number, this statement in the original specification was not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.78(a) and therefore not recognized by the Office, as

evidenced by it not being included on the filing receipt. Applicant's amendment filed December 19, 2005 to include the appropriate application number and thereby comply with the requirements under 37 CFR 1.78(a) renders the benefit claim untimely since it was not filed within the within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5).

Double Patenting

3. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown

to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

4. Claims 1-7, 9-11, 13-18, and 20-26 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 15, 25, 28, 33, 43, 46, and 48 of copending Application No. 09/965,359. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they each encompass a method of determining a number of plates to be used to print a predetermined number of labels including the steps of determining a minimum number of plates, calculating a first value representing an estimated production cost based on the minimum number of plates, increasing the number of plates, calculating a second value representing an estimated production cost based on the increased number of plates, and comparing the first and second values to determine the most cost effective number of plates to be used.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 8, 12, 19, and 27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest a method of determining a number of plates comprising all of the method steps as recited, in combination with and particularly including, determining whether the second value (i.e., the new total determined by increasing the number of plates and recalculating) is within a predetermined range of the first value and the range represents an approximate cost of a plate relative to an approximate cost of a sheet of material on which the fixed number of labels are printed using the plate.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Leslie J. Evanisko** whose telephone number is **(571) 272-2161**. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30 am-6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew H. Hirshfeld can be reached on (571) 272-2168. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Leslie J. Evanisko
Leslie J. Evanisko
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2854

lje
March 20, 2006